1: Honigmann E-5 (1943-1945) 1949 ND12 Nahane ND12

breathe. "He think about it." Then Jesus brought a small bird and threw it into the clay mouth of the image. Again Jesus spoke to the man and this time the figure replied with speech. "He talk damn good."

Jesus thought about what He had done. He decided that He ought to make a girl for this man. Giving the man some "lunch," Jesus told him to go to sleep. Then cutting into the man Jesus removed a left rib—the last rib. He put this under the blanket next to the man. When the man awoke a woman was sleeping alongside of him. Jesus told the man to "keep" the girl. He told the couple to raise children. When the man and woman died, Jesus said, the children would marry and they would have children and so there would always be people in the world.

Aboriginal elements are more sharply delineated in the myth of the origin of the sun and moon,[3] which was obtained from the same informant.

At first there was no light, just perpetual darkness. The sun and moon had a boss and were kept in a cabin where they furnished never failing light. The keeper of these bodies had a wife, who had a daughter. This girl drank water in which there was some dirt. She was unsuccessful in purifying the water and as a result of swallowing the dirt conceived and gave birth to a boy. The boy "grow smart quick." When he was able to walk around he began to cry and demanded the moon to play with. His grandfather assented and gave the moon to the child. The boy rolled the moon back and forth in the cabin until it accidentally rolled out the door and away. From then on moonlight appeared.

The next day the little boy began to cry for the sun. The grandfather heard him and exclaimed: "I'm tired of hearing that crying. Give it to him." So the mother gave the child the sun as a plaything. The boy rolled the sun back and forth until it too rolled away. Now the family found itself in darkness. They went to sleep. In the morning upon awakening they found daylight everywhere. "Good now. No more hard time."

Although lacking a comprehensive sample of Kaska speculation, we may nevertheless provisionally seek to classify their reflective thought. Ontologically the people are, of course, supernaturalistic in their conceptual perspective. That is, they tend to refer ultimate explanations of being to a principle which is beyond nature. Today this being is generally identified as an anthropomorphic God. It is not surprising to find this ontological theory associated with the metaphysical duality of mind and matter. Such dualism is evident in the notion that a person's thoughts can influence the capture of game and fur because of a power which is continuous with man's mind and also controls the animal world. Dualism also manifests itself in the idea of divination, in the ethical conceptions of free will and predestination, and in the belief that human life depends on the correlated functioning of body and soul. Explicitly, of course, the notion of metaphysical duality has never been formalized in Kaska philosophy.

One characteristic of epistemological thinking stands out clearly, the relative nature of truth. The Indian does not regard his thinking in absolutist, or universal, terms of validity. "That's what Injun believe," Old Man would say, implying the realization that white and other people have conceptual systems which differ from that held by the Kaska. Knowledge to the Indian is derived from experience and tradition. Since not all peoples have the

[3] The same tale occurs among the Kutchin and also the Tlingit. See Chapman, *Notes on the Tinneh Tribe of Anvik, Alaska* (1905), 8-10; Pinart, *Notes sur les Kolouches* (1871), 797-798.

1: Honigmann E-5 (1943-1945) 1949 ND12 Nahane ND12

812 829 same experience nor identical traditions, there follows the readily accepted assumption that the world contains different kinds of knowledge and different truths.

814 Despite the fact that the Indian lacks the ability to formulate ideas in strict chronological sequence (we have already referred to the difficulties experienced in securing chronological life histories), he may be credited with a historical sense. Examples of native history have been presented in reporting the traditional ideas of Kaska origins and the memories of life in the aboriginal society. This material is distinguished by its static, rather than dialectic quality, no attempt being made to relate the events which are described. As pointed out in connection with acculturation, the Kaska are not attracted to the past. There is relatively little interest in hearkening back to aboriginal times, certainly no sentimentalism. Only occasionally will a contemporary incident move some man to describe the event as similar to behavior which was commonplace in former days. Such historical attitudes promise that in one or two more generations the ability to report "old fashioned" life will have entirely disappeared.

ETHICS

577 183 Ethically and morally, as well as philosophically, the Kaska are inclined to be relativists, particularly when non-Indian behavioral norms are discussed. Thus people asked the ethnographer if it was true that white people sometimes married their parallel cousins, whom the Kaska classify as siblings. An affirmative answer met with no criticism or repugnance. Moral relativism is noted chiefly in connection with marital and sexual behavior; aggression and lack of generosity are not so tolerantly regarded. In the latter fields, the Indians tend to recognize more absolute values. Thus the second World War appeared to confuse many informants, and local traders are often criticized for neglecting to meet the Indians' standard of generosity.

The Kaska express the same theoretical conflict between free will and determinism that is familiar to students of western society. As evidence of determinism we may cite the fact that a person is thought to be bad because he has "bad blood." This evil disposition is inherited, so that an evil man produces evil children. Opposing these ideas is the belief that an evil person can be taught to control his behavior. It is possible too for a good man to produce bad children, since it is often through error that good people commit evil—they "make mistake." Although this conflict between free will and determinism comes out in interviews, in everyday life there is little question of the moral accountability of the individual.

Abstract ethical ideals, like righteousness and justice, have little meaning for the Indian. When forced to concern himself with formulating ideal conceptions of human nature, he is primarily concerned with such concrete individual and social virtues as generosity, industriousness, pacificity, courage, skill, and (in women) marital chastity.

895 577 183 The ideal man is first of all generous. He gives good gifts and helps out a friend who is in need of food or of some capital goods like traps or cartridges. A good man is not pugnacious or "mean"; he is disinclined to unfriendly gossip and hypocrisy, nor does he seek to exert authority. He avoids talking unfavorably about his friends, is not cranky, and will not fight unless unduly provoked. Putting these traits more positively, virtue may be recognized in a pleasant disposition. A good man is ready to laugh and eager for fun. When he drinks he enjoys himself, but "he don't fight nothing." Finally, the ideal male reflects industry. He is,